32ND YEAR

The Reader's Digest

FEBRUARY 1953

An article a day of enduring significance, in condensed permanent booklet form

This extraordinary missionary rides the Alaskan Highway, travels in railroad cabooses and has all of the Alaskan hinterland as his unofficial parish

The Lord and Bert Bingle

Condensed from Guideposts

Dorothy Walworth

BERT BINGLE is a sturdy man nearing 60, with shrewd blue eyes behind thick spectacles, and a comforting midwestern voice. His face is merry, his hands are calloused, and he has a rolling walk because he's used to treading rough country. He's worn out 14 cars, turned over half a dozen times, driven through floods. Alaskans believe he is made of granite and gold.

Bingle is a Presbyterian missionary in Yukon Territory, with a parish 500 miles long, a land of harsh mountains, glaciers and savage gales. In settlements like Dot Lake, Tok and Tanacross, he lives out his religion with the hard labor of his hands and the stanch, tireless love of his heart. When Bert gets too old to ride the freights or walk 40 miles to help a homesteader, there will be nobody, folks say, who can fill his boots.

"I don't deserve any credit," he told me. "I'm a plain, ordinary guy, and often, like everybody else, I feel at the end of my rope. Then I pray: 'Lord, You'll have to take over,' and He does. There's always been a partnership — the Lord and Bert Bingle."

In the last 28 years Bingle has had all the Alaskan hinterland as his unofficial parish. There isn't a tundra village he hasn't visited. With his own hands he has built four churches, 12 chapels and close to 100 log houses for homesteaders. Best of all, he's built his teaching deep into the hearts of Alaskans.

"One missionary teaches one way to Heaven and the next missionary teaches another," an Eskimo told me. "The Reverend Bingle says: 'Ask God yourself, and He will show you the way.' Like our Lord, he speaks in parables, about the food in our caches and about the walrus. These things make us see God's providence."

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Bert Bingle was born in an Ohio village, a carpenter's son. When he was 11 years old a missionary spoke at the village church, and Bert felt called — but he wasn't sure. Three years later, still not sure, he went to a school for missionaries. There he met his future wife, Mabel. After graduation they married.

For a while Bert taught school. But he was haunted by the thought that he should be sharing the life of those who had, perhaps, no other friend on earth. Finally he said: "Lord, I'm not much. But You and I together can do plenty. Let me be Your partner." And, in 1925, Mabel and he took a freight boat to Alaska, landing at Cordova.

In those days Cordova was a small, rough town, with a railroad that crawled up the towering mountains for 196 miles to the rich Kennecott Copper Mines, 9000 feet above sea level. Those mines were Bert's first parish. Some pit heads were so remote that he could reach them only by walking 30 miles beyond the railroad, or by riding in an ore bucket on a cable line.

"Sometimes the miners got drunk and fought," Bert told me, "because they wanted to forget their past. Many of them were eating their hearts out on account of women back in the States who'd married other guys. They were bitter, and I had to work to get that poison out of them. I told them the difference between a pit mule and a man was forgiveness. But it's hard to forgive.

"I don't kid myself that it was easy for those men to forget and to change. But I do know a lot of them said I'd made them human beings, instead of pit mules."

In 1934 the mines shut down and Bert Bingle moved to Anchorage. A few months later he heard the U. S. Government was sending 800 settlers up to Palmer, in the Matanuska Valley. Nobody else wanted to look after a bunch of greenhorns in the raw wilderness. So Bert volunteered.

"The Government had told those folks the Matanuska Valley would be cleared," Bert said to me. "But nothing was ready to make them even halfway comfortable. About 100 of them skedaddled back to the States. The others drew their farmsites out of a hat, and waded out into the brush. Until we could get hold of some tents all those men, women and children lived outdoors, eaten alive by mosquitoes. It rained, too, for 60 hours straight. Everybody came down with colds or dysentery."

Bingle found that many of the new arrivals had never farmed. To get them started he taught them how to set up tents, dig latrines, clear the land. For himself, Mabel and their two small children, he pitched a tent in an empty pigpen near Palmer. Bert chose this spot because he could use the wire fence as a radio antenna and get the news, which he typed down and handed out as a daily paper.

The food problem soon became acute. Bert knew humpback salmon were running in the ocean, so for three months he never slept except at low water. When the tide came in he was down on the beach filling his gill nets with fish, which he lugged back to the Valley.

"After a while some folks said they were tired of salmon," Bert told me. "So I showed them how to hunt — they hadn't ever had a gun in their hands."

In September Bert Bingle and about 25 of the 400 remaining settlers began building the United Protestant Church at Palmer. Valley people called it the Church of a Thousand Trees, for it took that many to do the job.

They toiled 24 hours a day, in shifts. Women served coffee and sandwiches around the clock, and did the simpler tasks like chinking and oiling logs. When it was finished, people came from a hundred miles around to the Church of a Thousand Trees.

In 1938 life in the Matanuska Valley had become fairly comfortable, so Bert went where the need was greater. He moved to Fairbanks, 120 miles from the Arctic Circle, and began ministering to the men who worked for the Alaska Railroad. He rode the freight cars and cabooses between Fairbanks and Anchorage, holding services somewhere every day.

Sometimes Eskimos told him of villages where no missionary had been for many moons. Whenever he had spare time, he traveled to those desolate places, by dogsled or plane.

Bert talked to the Eskimos about the simple things they knew. For instance, he said the stake line put in the snow to guide their dog teams was like the stake line driven into this world by the Sermon on the Mount. If they followed that line blizzard and darkness could never take them from their proper course, and they would get home.

At the beginning of World War II, Army men started building the 1591-mile-long Alaska Highway. Near Christmas, 1942, Bert learned that no letters or gifts from home were reaching one group of men, the 97th Engineers, who were stationed about 340 miles from Fairbanks. With the help of the Fairbanks Red Cross and American Legion, Bert made little presents for every man. At 60 below zero, he began his long trek down the Highway.

"That was about the hardest trip I ever made," he told me. "I had to crawl under the car with my axe every ten miles and knock off the ice. Sometimes I had to chop the ice hummocks off the road so my car could get over. But the bridges w re the worst; they were temporary things, hardly wide enough for one car, rocking in the wind, ice-coated, with no guardrails.

"I got to one bridge that looked plain impossible. One slip, and I'd go down a thousand feet. I prayed: 'Lord, take care of me. I've got work to do on the other side of that bridge.' My car passed over, steady as a rock. All the troops got their

presents for Christmas. You should have seen their faces!

"On the way home I kept thinking of those men, and I got careless. I went a bit too fast on glare ice and skidded over a precipice. Fortunately, my car didn't go all the way down — only about 60 feet, where it got tangled up with a spruce. I didn't get a scratch, but my car was smashed. I said, 'Lord, it was all my fault. I didn't have my mind on the road. I couldn't expect You to suspend the law of gravity for my sake.' I started walking the 75 miles back to Fairbanks, and I was plumb lucky. An Army jeep happened along and picked me up."

Bert now spends three days a week with the bush folk along a 300-mile stretch of the Alaska Highway. Though improved, this road is still rough going; in the spring melting snow causes floods in the valleys, which Bert's car has to cross with water swirling above the hubcaps. Three days a week he rides the cabooses on the railway belt, and once a year he drives the 1591 miles to Whitehorse, visiting wilderness cabins that have no other missionary. Every week, when he starts down the Highway, the Fairbanks radio announces: "The Reverend Bingle is on the road. Anybody who needs help, go out and look for his car."

"We get along pretty good in the summer," one of Bert's people told me, "but when winter weathers us in, the darkness gets on our nerves. We quarrel over little things, and we're close to having what the sourdoughs call 'bush fever.' The high spot of our week is the day Reverend Bingle comes. He sort of busts into the midst of us, ready to shore up a wall, fix a stove, listen to a grief, do anything a body needs. The going is rough, here in the bush, and if it wasn't for Reverend Bingle we couldn't live it through."

"I figure America ought to be proud of my bush people," Bert says. "They're pioneering, like folks in the States three centuries ago. They're great. If I was a young man, I'd ask for the same life all over again, serving the pioneers."

One night in Anchorage I saw Bert Bingle receive, from the Presbyterian Board of Missions, an inexpensive pin and scroll for his many years of service. I could not help but think of the costly gifts that many men get for fewer years at easier tasks. However, looking at the radiant face of Bert Bingle, I saw that he did not need any reward upon this earth.

Missionary Biography No. 15

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Bingle.

College, Alaska
October 12, 1955

Dr. Jackman.

Dear Friends:

As you have heard it said before, our Parish is about 300 miles long; extending on both sides of a Railroad that goes north from the Gulf of Alaska, skirting mountains, canyons, glaciers, crossing rivers, valleys and glacier morain until it reaches the heart of the Interior of Alaska. Little communities are found at various intervals along this band of steel, most of which care for the Railroad in one way or another; these are of course in addition to the main cities or villages. Besides railroading, mining is the activity that is making up the economy of the area we serve -- both coal and gold.

Four main places in the Northern portion compose the four points from which we work. Two are Railroad Area Headquarters and two are coal mines. It was at one of the coal mines that we built the beautiful log chapel, which was dedicated October the 2nd, to whom you sent your congratulations. We want to thank you for your remembrance and your best wishes. May God be close to you, too.

Day and night work up to the midnite hour of Saturday, October 1st was necessary to have the chapel in readiness for dedication. A crew of six women and six men working in their available spare moments the last week did the trick, that allowed us to procede on schedule. My broken foot and the fact that our home is 120 miles north did not help too much, also having other areas to cover. At times I was on hands and knees trying to do carpenter work; at other times I even had to lie down prone to drive the nail that needed to be driven. But where there is a will there is a way and folks helped all the more, as I struggled ahead. We came thru, as I said, on time.

The red cedar wainscoat, the sheetrock up to the log ceiling joists; the red cedar ceiling above the log joists; each board carefully selected for the gable end which was set in a fan shaped pattern. It all makes the chapel very picturesque. My log pulpit, the log altar rail and the portable organ from Miss Helen Scott of the Grace Presbyterian Church in Jenkintown, Pa. set the front off like a lovely worship center in a large church. We were very happy about it all.

But not only were we happy about it, so were the many surprised parishioners as they gathered for the opening worship service which was Holy Communion. About 30 came in from five miles west on a caboose pulled by the switch-yard deisel engine. Others came from neighboring coal mines by car or truck. Since the visitors had to leave home early we had coffee and doughnuts for them following the Communion Service at the Community Recreation Hall. As the second service following, the building was filled to overflowing. Three beautiful bouquets of chrysanthemums were given by the neighboring mine families for the occasion. They gave a finishing touch to the chapel and were a delight to the pastor. A small child was baptized at the morning service. The parents were both formerly from Norway.

In the Recreation Hall a pot-luck dinner marked the activity at noon-time and how those coal mining families did bring in the food! There was, besides the vegetables, salads, pies and cakes -- moose, caribou, wild sheep, tame beef and grisley bear. What a feast it was! We finished this part of the day by showing one of the Moody Films - "Naaman the Leper."

At 3:00 p.m. the crowd proceeded to the chapel for the Dedication Service. The Moderator of the Synod of Washington and the Moderator of Yukon Presbytery had been invited to participate in this service, but neither one could be present due to heavy winds in the area. So we dedicated the building anyway. At the close of the Dedication Ritual a Choir composed of women beautifully sang, "Bless this House".

By caboose and car or on foot the parishioners returned to their homes. Thank you again for your messages of congratulations.

Most sincerely,

JAN 13 1958

College, Alaska
Jan 7 - 58

3/17 Wrd - do you want to write?
10

Dr. J. E. Jackman - Sec
Dept of Work in Alaska
Bd. of Nat. Missions.

12/31/57 Ltr attached

My dear Dr. Jackman: - Your letter Rec'd. Thanks so much for it - Will be happy to see you in Sacramento. We should Stay Thurs. night with a Mrs Rose Harris who used to be here, in case I dont show up - She might know details.

Spent most of the day trying to work out suggestion for enlarging the house. Vic helped me as you will all. I think, if you can read my writing, that the addition of 14 x 24 on the back of the house next to the side road will be most practical. If we enlarge the bathroom so a tub can be put in back of the door and the shower stall eliminated to make room for an Electric washer-dryer combination - Space 32" X 36" I think we would solve plumbing & heating costs problems both. cant get too big a heating plant here as he is gone & must burn oil. No salary would pay for much more oil than we use. - Hope you can make it out.

What was the $187.00 check for? - Could you give me 12 more Presbyterian Life's to replace the 12 we sent going to the Arctic? We paid for those we have been sending as said before we will move out of the house the end of the 28th - Let us know when they are coming. Happy New year - Bert & Ruth.

Bingle Fdr
re pastorate

12/59

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
1959

~~Dear Friends~~

Dear Friends:-

1959 Christmas is about to descend upon us. How could it come so quickly from December 1958? Since last Christmas with Rev. Munro's Mission and Church at Delta Junction we have had a variety of living.

Early January we were assigned to the Mission at Yakutat for 4½ months. We had been there before on board the Alaska Steamship boats, but never to linger over an hour and never to enjoy its spectacular scenery. The Indian Village we served was our first pure Indian Work and we did enjoy it. Those folks were lovely to us. We missed them much over the succeeding months.

Being in the Alaska Presbytery Area we were privileged to attend the Spring Meeting in Skagway; going via Juneau. This again was a great joy and privilege just to be with the personnel of the area. In April I was also allowed to attend our Yukon Presbytery in Anchorage.

Since mid-May until Oct. 27 we have been at Harding Lake. Here the folks of the Fairbanks Area have constructed a Youth Camp, which we have managed for the last 3 summers. Of course we helped, or even directed a corps of volunteer workers in the building of this camp. Mrs. Bingle helped alongside (her missionary husband) laying up log after log. Our sister-in-law, Mrs. J. H. Bingle did the cooking for us the last two years and she is loved by everyone. We now have 12 buildings at Camp, including a lovely log house, at present owned by ourselves. Our Church is about to assume the responsibility for the Camp. For this we are very happy.

At present we serve the rural area from 6 miles south of Fairbanks, to Harding Lake 50 miles south on the Richardson Highway. We have 2 Sunday Schools in operation and one preaching point. There are hundreds of settlers getting started in this 50 miles long and 10 miles wide area. Some have lovely homes, some just getting started and the going is indeed rough in many instances.

May each and all of you have a lovely and a Merry Christmas and a rewarding 1960.

Season's Greetings

The Bingles

JAN 1 1 1960

College, Alaska.
Jan. 8, 1960.

Dr. J. E. Jackman, Sec'ry
Dept. of Work in Alaska
Board of Narional Missions.

My dear Dr. Jackman:

I am sorry I did not get to answer your letter sooner but I felt I needed more information. So I went to Anchorage to get it. I take for granted everything will go thru as planned down there. There was no formal meeting on the subject by the Lake Board but Frank talked to the key men personally and they are heartily in accord. It is difficult to make a public announcement as the men feal that will be the last of the work they will get out of the present caretaker.

I favor the phrase "take leave from the Board of National Missions" if it does not jeprodise my standing in the ministry. I do not want to take leave from that, I would like an assignment from some body to this new work. If I went to the states or even here I could not ride the trains with clergy unless I preserved my status. I will let you guide me on that.

The date of termination I would like to slow down a couple of months. I would like to see the Harding Lake camp thru the Summer if at all possible. We have a heavy schedule and certainly John cannot spend the time necessary looking after the many details for the three remaining months. If I lived at the camp which I expect to do, I can look after it in the evening as well as care for my regular assignment. But this is all contingent on:

Is this field I have, to continue? Personally I believe it should. I have hardly scratched the surface with the possibilities. Eielson area has not been touched. There are other areas about Fairbanks away from the churches that need some one to be their pastor. Then

there is a matter of the hoped for building at 6 mile. The double road goes out there this summer. You will soon see a new growth in that area, at a greater pace than evenat present. There will be the usual pickup from services held in houses to services held in chapels, if there is a chapel built. ---If we do not intend to carry on this work these people should not be given further hopes. It would be tragic to do so. If we postpone another year and there is much more development, then another group could move in and when they do our inducement to the Indian, Eskimo, the negro as well as the white that is there now, will possibly be picked up by that other group.-This is all something to think about.

Last Autumn when you were here we had discussion about work camps. If we as a church did build in 6 mile area this Summer and you would give me the responsibility of getting a building up and the roof on that would be similar in construction to the Harding Lake Chapel, and if I could have a work camp group in from June 20th to Aug.1st. and if the work camp was of the size that could be easily handled (4 men and no more than 4 women) I believe that I could let that be the finishing touch to the work up in this area. In short then my date for quitting work would be Aug. first and my months vacation to follow during the month of august. Regardless of building or no building could not that the the terminal dates rather than July first with the month of June for Vacation? If we built, one of the men in the 6 mile area, the man in whose house we hold services, is a cement block man. He would lay the blocks and get the basement in. I would do the log work. I am certain we can do it for the amount of money allotted. We did some figuring already and I am sre we have some to spare- but if it is as the Harding Lake building, only about the size of John's church. 24 X 64. Bert J Bingle.

APR 1 1960

3of 1027

College, Alaska.
Mar. 30, 1960.

Dr. J. E. Jackman, Sec'ry
Dept of Work in Alaska
Boarddof National Missions
New York, N. Y.

My dear Dr. Jackman:

Your letter was received some days ago and I wish to thank you so much for it. I shall be happy to have the chance to talk over some things on your trip into Fairbanks. I do think the salary for the rest of the year - July one on- is quite slim when the next year the first six months it will be much worse. I am forced to make some expenditures now that I might save money later so it puts one on a defensive somewhat. But the good Lord never did turn a deaf ear and I do expect to make out alright now.

I am concerned about one thing more than the rest. I talked it over with the insurance adjuster and he did not think it would make the slightest of difference. It concerns my back. It has been giving me much agony lately and I asked the Ins. man if changing types of labor would make it difficult to get adjustment in case my back went clear bad. I thought perhaps we should think in terms of Kings Lake sending the salary thru the Board so I would not for sure get "fouled" up. I do not know whether they would buy that or not. We did it for Harding Lake. You could take out all deductions there. When you get here you might give some answer to the question. The Insurance man thought it would not be necessary. He thought it could be referred back to the orignal coverage if things went worse.

The weather is quite cold nights. Was 10 below here last night again. I think it will hold for some little time yet. Due to be that cold tonight.

I do not know if anyone told you about Mrs. Cleworth or not. She all at once got high blood pressure and her kidneys refused to function. She was taken to the hospital where they thought the matter would correct itself shortly but she became worse. It was a question of whether she could even make it at all. They were able to get that corrected and she was resting up to go home when she started in labor. The baby came within an hour and was still born. Brian did not tell us and I happend to stop to see how she was on the way out the road calling when I found him headed out alone to bury the baby. I had no time to call John but went with him and together we had a little service. Later I called Jean and then saw John and both of us saw Irene in the Hospital. She has had rough going and she looks rough. One can give Murrial Urban possible credit for saving the woman's life. She asked her a couple questions after she saw how she looked on Mon. last week and told her to get on the phone right away for the doctor. Too me she was a dear for that quick thinking and acting.

You may have known all the above. We sure have been praying for her and hope you can add your part to the whole.

Easter is not too far away. I will have somethings fairly good for that time but certainly not like it was last year or the years before that

Sincerely
Bert J. Bugle. (BJB)

Al Bingle Fdr

CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR GREETINGS

Dear Frieda:-

To our Relatives, Friends
(Loved Ones) everywhere:

Here it is -- already 12 months since we sent our last Greetings! Hope this year has been as merry and happy as the wishes for you were last year. This year has been for us, one of change and one of variety.

Change has come in that we moved 300 miles south to a former youth camp which we helped to start, with Dr. C. E. Albrecht, Clyde Kings and many Matanuska Valley folks, as well as the Rasmussons of Anchorage. We took a year's leave of absence from Sunday School Mission work under the Board of National Missions. This will carry us at least until retirement age June 1961. We are trying to make ends meet financially on a Camp Program. It has not always been done, you know in camp experience.

Our 35 years under the Board's direction has taken us from where we could see Asia from our West Islands, to deep in the Yukon Territory of Canada; from the Arctic Ocean on the north, to and down the Gulf of Alaska on the south. We have left behind 2 large churches and organizations, 5 new manses and 2 reconstructed ones; 3 wayside chapels, one on the longest church in the world the "Railroad Church" (6 feet wide, 250 miles long), also we have left the Lovely Harding Lake Camp with its beautiful and inspiring memorial chapel. For these years of service, we have been proud. We want to say to one and all, the Presbyterian Denomination has been good to us. We could not have worked the Lord's work in a better physical and spiritual set-up.

In the variety there is always the unusual or exciting thing. Here I am not thinking of aches and pains, or of walking the floor to give the old bones a little rest at night, then going back to the sack, but I am thinking of assignments. The last year of my work I am Moderator of the Presbytery. This last Summer, I took a fast trip to Spokane to the Synod Meeting. Now I am acting Chaplain of the New State Youth Camp, about 4 miles from here. There is never a dull moment. Also, I should say that we are putting a new kitchen on the dining hall here at the Camp.

Other ventures: Yes, our son came up this Summer. That is always a great boost. We tried to get our daughter to come with him, but what a break! The Stork came just ahead of the traveling date, six grandchildren there and two with the son, make eight. Everyone seems happy back in Ohio and Illinois where they live. Mrs. Waterman of Oak Park, Illinois, came with Jim. She is always a blessing to Alaska be it here or in Illinois. Then lastly, Mabel met a bear. It came right up on the porch. It looked her over pretty carefully, then took a few steps. It returned and looked her over again. Do not know if it had hungry looks or feelings as it had gotten into the neighbor's meat and butter just prior. The bear made a mistake, Mabel ate bear steaks instead. Now the moose come before our door. At Delta it was buffalo.

Have a good year and may the Good Lord be near to you all the year.

Season's Greetings and
Many thanks for your
Constant Helpfulness.

Bert & Mabel Bingle,
Bert & Mabel Bingle

The Bingle

see printed leaflet

Item file 1958.
Bingle file

ALASKAN MISSIONS

MY 28 YEARS IN THE YUKON PRESBYTERY

by

Rev. Bert J. Bingle

College, Alaska

PREFACE

During these past few years, Dr. Rolland Armstrong, Assistant Director of the Alaskan Department of the Board of National Missions, and I have discussed the qualifications of the Alaskan Missionary, particularly the one who serves in isolated or new development areas. Since I have seen many come and go over the last 28 years, the thought occured that perhaps I could give a summary of what some of the qualifications would be. I have not been asked to do this. It is just a "shot in the dark" that might be accepted and read.

Previously I have published two small booklets. One on the first three years, 1935 to 1938, of the new colonization project in the Matanuska Valley, and the other on stories of incidents in our Alaskan life, working it up in a devotional booklet. This was first started so as to give the Eskimo a devotional booklet which would be something he could read and understand, but later was expanded so as to tell of our Alaskan work to others. My home church, the Trinity Evangelical United Brethern Church near Risingsun, Ohio, in which I might say I was born and reared, paid for this latter publication.

The qualifications of the Alaskan Missionary as given in this little booklet will be tied up with my own life and experiences. It will speak of my home, my conversion, my growth in the Christian life, my call to the ministry, my school work, my first years of the ministry and my subsequent call to Alaska, and the events that happened there.

No one knows more than myself about my own shortcomings, my incapacities or as some would say "thick-headedness", or the deficiencies in my spiritual life. I sometimes wonder how our administrator in New York keeps his patience as many unexpected or unusual things are done. But he is certainly understanding and kind in his directiveness. It is with the aid of God and the Board of National Missions that we are what we are.

DEDICATION

This little booklet I wish to dedicate to

Dr. J. E. Jackman

Secretary of the Department of Alaska

Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church USA

156 Fifth Ave., New York 10, New York

and

Dr. Rolland R. Armstrong

Assistant Secretary of the Department of Alaska

Board of National Missions, Presbyterian Church USA

Box 2539, Juneau, Alaska

MY START

One has to begin somewhere and that might as well be where one is born. My mother often told me that when I was 6 weeks old I contracted the whooping cough. The case was a very serious one, mother never taking her clothes off for a whole week, watching over my bed day and night lest the little one would slip away.

I can imagine that my mother, like any true mother, spent much time upon her knees in prayer concerning the final dedication of her son to Christ if only God would spare his life. Unexplainable as it was to the doctor, the son became well. As Hannah of old had dedicated her son, Samuel, to the Lord, so had my mother dedicated me to the same Heavenly Father.

Through the years in my ministry I have felt that I was set aside for the task I was doing. God was using me in the way that my mother had dedicated me to be used. During her active years of life I have always felt that my mother's prayers have been with me. Although my father was less demonstrative in his Christian experience, I felt that his prayers also were with me. At times I have felt him to be very near even though he has long since gone to glory.

It is not by accident that boys and girls go into the ministry or the mission field. Nine out of every ten come from praying homes, from fathers and mothers who have dedicated their precious ones to Christ. To have more recruits for the Lord's work today, we need more praying fathers and mothers. The field is white unto the harvest. The Lord needs to send laborers into his vineyard.

MY CONVERSION

A second thing that is a prerequisite for the missionary is that he have the second birth. Hannah could dedicate her son to the Lord but there came a time when Samuel had to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

I distinctly remember an incident in the old country church on a certain Sunday morning when I was eleven years of age. The church was having a series of revival services at the time. Sunday School was over and the morning services had begun. Our minister was not present and the laymen of the congregation were conducting the services. I saw my Sunday School teacher (she was my day school teacher also) bow her head in prayer. I thought to myself, "I wonder for whom she is praying." I soon learned. She was praying for the three boys in her class that had been so close together in their boyhood days, and she came straight toward us. When she spoke to us about giving our hearts to the Lord, I thought, "If my teacher thinks that I need the Lord more than I have Him now, I had better just go right up to that altar and pray it out till the Lord becomes more real to my life." That is what all three of us did. And thank God for that second birth!

Sometimes we see young men and women go into the ministry or the mission field who have never really come to that precious decision in their lives. They have never felt the hand of God take hold of them and lead them to higher ground. They have never come to the place where they have said, "Yes," and then knew that from there on their lives would be different. When such a decision has not been made by them, they cannot lead others into that high experience. They may not all have had that same type of experience; some come to the decision in the quiet of their living room, perhaps, but all of us at some time must have said, "Yes," to the Lord. May God grant that there is more of it in our churches.

MY CALL

I have always been fascinated with the call of Isaiah of old. He heard the Lord ask, "Whom shall I send, who will go for us?" Then after much deliberation Isaiah answered, "Here am I, Lord, send me." That decision perhaps came not without difficulty.

Shortly after my saying, "Yes," to God, there came a missionary from South Africa to our church to speak. At the close of her prayer she asked of the Lord, "Lord, grant that from this congregation this evening that one would be called to the mission field." I thought to myself, "It won't be me." But it was.

For three years I fought that call. I had no peace day or night. Things did not shape up rightly for me in my personal life as I fought that call. Then one day I just could not stand it any longer. My prayers were sticking in my throat. I could not sing, "I'll go where you want me to go--o'er mountain, or plain, or sea." Finally I said, "Lord, if to have peace in my own heart and life, I have to say, 'Yes, I will go where you want me to go--o'er mountain, or plain, or sea,' then I will say it." When I made this decision, instantly came over my heart and life a peace that can never be described in words. From that time on I did not care what it would cost or where it would take me.

And how did this decision affect others? One day my Sunday School teacher was talking to another and she said, "I think we have a missionary in my Sunday School class." I said, "Who told you?" We should remember the scripture, "All Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was destined to be a prophet of the Lord." God tells others. We tell it by our lives.

What we need in the mission field today is men and women who feel that God is calling them there. People who will say along with Isaiah, "Here am I, Lord, send me." When we feel that call, it will make us love people, rich or poor, high or low. We will be dedicated to the task.

COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

High school being completed, I was ready and attempting to go to college. Those last two years of high school had been a little rough. Father was absent from home, and I ran the farm, pumped two leases in the oil field, played football, and tried to keep awake as I sat in class at school. My church life was not without incident as it was there that I met the future Mrs. Bingle. Together we organized and piloted a County Youth Movement that was to last for many years after we were on the mission field.

College was a step in faith. I had but $35 of my own and $50 which I had borrowed. I took the train for North Central College, 275 miles away in Naperville, Ill. After checking in and paying some on tuition, board and room, and purchasing my books, I struck out to look for a job so that I could eat after two weeks. I beat more dirty rugs, mowed more lawns, and shucked more corn for an education than most of my classmates. I advanced in status, however, and by the end of my seminary training at Evangelical Theological Seminary, I had graduated to being a janitor.

Would I recommend these as necessary deeds in school for the applicant to the mission field? I cannot say that it is necessary entirely, but I do know that it has helped me in all my mission work. One half of our time is spent in just keeping things physically able to function during certain times of the year. Much of the physical work of the field falls back on the minister, else it will not be done. I heard one elder say, "These men are busy and you cannot expect the women to come over and shovel your snow." In other words, the preacher must "get on the ball" or move on.

But college and seminary would not have been so easy had it not been for a friend there. Professor E. F. George was my former pastor from Ohio, where we had learned to love him. He was my counsellor and advisor through college and seminary. As the Lord sent the Comforter to his weary and uncertain disciples, so he sent a friend on ahead of me. He is our friend still.

AND TWO BECAME ONE

The Good Book says, "And he took unto himself a helpmeet." These words were more than a phrase for us as the years were to show.

College and seminary were finally over and the bride-to be, Mabel P. Morrison, who had been in college with me for 3 years, came from Pocatello, Idaho, where she was teaching, for my graduation. We then traveled to our homes in Ohio. June the 17th at high noon in the year 1923 we were united in marriage at the bride's home in Fremont, Ohio, by a seminary friend, Rev. Paul Jones. It was a great day in our lives and though the bride would in no way say she would obey, yet she did say that she would be a good fellow traveler. That characteristic has never been excelled by any pastor's wife.

After 3 years in our first area of labor our daughter, Vella, was born. One might say that she was reared on the frontier and had the capacity to take care of herself, be it in the home, the town, or out in the great out-of-doors. She is now living on a farm in northern Ohio. After 2 years in our second area of labor a son came to our home. Conditions were not quite right for Mrs. Bingle to be cared for where we lived, so we went back to Ohio where James put in his appearance. It was the hottest day in Fremont in 30 years. What an initiation for an Alaskan! James, as well as Vella, grew up in Alaska and he too could give a good account of himself under almost any circumstance. At the time of graduation from high school he won a Pepsi Cola scholarship which sent him to college for 4 years. Today he is working as a research technician at the Argonne National Atomic Energy Laboratory, near Chicago, Ill. He has recently been elected an elder of the church of which he is a member, the First Presbyterian Church of DuPage.

Mrs. Bingle through the years has traveled thousands of miles with me throughout Alaska in our missionary efforts there. She also cares for the letters and paper work at home. She has been a wonderful mother and a companionable wife. She has been that helpmeet spoken of in times of old.

IDAHO INTERNSHIP

"God works in mysterious ways His wonders to perform; He plants His footsteps on the sea and rides upon the storm." After our school days in Naperville, we found ourselves in the West. Somehow we got all mixed up, due to wrong actions by individuals who somehow did not understand the call to God's work in its larger sense, and we wound up teaching school for two years. But as Paul withdrew to Arabia that he might get the larger vision, so were these two years of teaching for us. Somehow as both of us taught we found that we had to "put it on the line," or our students would not get the information that they needed. That served to make our work educational as well as inspirational as the years came on.

For three years following our teaching experience I labored as pastor of the Community Church in a little cowpunching, sheep herding, mining town in Idaho. Our work with the youth there was very stimulating. The adults, too, gave a good response and there we learned to live with, work with, and love people of different religious faiths and those of no faith. In summer we were responsible for the physical set-up of the Presbytery's church camp, running the dining hall and doing the multitude of chores that go with such an undertaking. Later on in our ministry there, we were able to help the State Hi Y organization conduct their summer camp. Those were great days, except when a mountain lion might give a child-like scream just back of your tent house in the dark of the night!

This experience in Idaho with the large school system at Twin Falls and the pastorate at Bellevue under the Presbyterian Board of National Missions, together with the youth work of the community and the Presbytery, was a post-graduate course of schooling for our work in Alaska. All of us with Paul must withdraw at some time right after our new start to size up ourselves and our work and our relationship with the Lord. Then later we can do the Lord's work most effectively.

CORDOVA--OUR FIRST LOVE

The psalmist says, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills." The hills about Cordova- or I should say mountains- became a great part of our lives during our seven years in that coastal city.

We arrived in Cordova, Alaska, on the evening of the 18th of May, 1928. It was raining, and I mean raining. It came down horizontally. My clothes were for a country of 13 inches of rainfall per year; here we found it to rain 16 and even 17 feet in one year. In one month during 1929 it rained 93 inches. Well, this rain did not stop for three days after our arrival, but when it did finally stop we discovered that behind our manse, only a quarter of a mile away, were intriguing mountains going up to a height of 3000 feet above tide water. In fact, the whole town lay in a pocket of mountains. Immediately one wondered what was on top of those mountains and what was on the other side.

Never in the seven years we lived in Cordova did I go to bed without lifting the curtain and taking one more last look at those mountains. The darkless nights of the summer and the moonlit landscape of the winter brought a greater fascination day after day. Even when the storms would be raging on the outside of the house, I still would lift that curtain before retiring to look at those mountains even though I knew I could not see them. I knew that they were there.

Our religion is like that at times. God may be very real most of the time, but there are other times when He seems to be engulfed in the greatest of darkness. But if we come to Him night after night regardless of the storm, we know that He is still there even though we cannot see a thing. The psalmist lifted his eyes unto the hills. Rain or shine, winter or summer, dark or light, he lifted his eyes. It was a symbol of his thoughts about God. To him, his God dwelt there. Even though he could not see Him, God was still there.

CORDOVA--THE FISHING INDUSTRY

Two thirds of the population of that town of 1400 did just as Simon Peter did when he said, "I go fishing." Salmon with its various varieties, clams, shrimp, crabs, and halibut were all sought for and marketed there in that fishing town. Six salmon canneries and the crab and clam canneries employed these local residents and imported many others.

A captain of one of the "pickup" boats that bring in the thousands of fish from the fishermen many miles away, or from the fish traps that were scattered along the shore line, asked me if I did not wish to accompany him on one of his trips. So I, too, said with Peter, "I go fishing." Such trips as these made me love the sea. After a day or so out the captain entrusted me with the boat while he caught some much needed sleep. It takes and developes faith as you steer your ship hour after hour by compass toward an unseen object that you have never laid eyes on but which the captain had assured you would be there. And then when you spy the light that leads you into the proper channel, what a good feeling that is!

But the important thing about those trips was that I learned to know and love my parishoners. These fishermen, the Greek, the Scandanavian, the Scot, the Philippino, the Japanese, or the Indian, were men of daring and adventure to me. They knew no fear; they had a trust and a confidence. At times I would look through the binoculars and see some dark object being tossed about out in the deep, and I would ask the captain, "What is that out there?" He would answer, "Just a couple of tough fishermen."

As the Lord knew His fishermen, so it is up to us as His servants to know our fishermen, or parishoners. They have much to teach us If we realize that, then we can in turn teach them.

CORDOVA--THE COPPER INDUSTRY

How much that is a part of our livlihood have people thousands of miles away provided for us? As Solomon built his temple with the labor of peoples way over on the Phonecian coast and others carried the product of this labor on their backs all the way to Palestine, so is the economy of our nation sustained by the labors of others far distant. We had such a place two hundred miles north and east of Cordova, the Kennecott Copper mine. That mine served our nation in time of war. It served to provide communication systems. It served the housewife from the kettle in the kitchen to the tubing in the bathroom. At our first coming to Cordova, some five hundred miners were digging out the copper at the rate of nearly two million dollars worth per month.

These people lived in isolation. They were the trained engineers of the mining profession as well as the general laborers that go with the mining. Cooks and bakers and candlestick makers lived and worked there. There was just one question that any one of them would ask as the pastor came to make his monthly call; "What is going on outside." Why did they ask that question? It was because in those days there was no radio, no television, no newspapers reaching them at their breakfast or supper table. They longed to know just what was happening somewhere else, even though it might be just down the railroad a short piece.

It is one thing for the minister to know his Lord, and it is another thing to know his neighbor and what he is doing and how he is living, or what the world at large is doing. If the minister cannot answer the engineer or even the "bull-cook" his questions, he will have difficulty in directing that engineer or that kitchen "flunky" to God. We need to pray the prayer of being made aware of others in this world who are serving us and indescribably are a part of our world and without whom we cannot live.

CORDOVA--THE RAILROAD TOWN

As it was said in one place in the journeys of Paul, "They came to a place where two ways met," so it can be said that Cordova was a place where two ways met. With Paul the writer was talking about riptides at sea, but here at Cordova we mean a place where the iron trail met the ocean going vessels of the sea. This railroad was bringing out the copper that was being mined at the distant mine at Kennecott. Here were the conductor, the brakeman, the engineer, the fireman, the track worker, the operator. Just as were the fishermen and the copper miners, so were these also my parishoners. The trains had to run, winter or summer, rain or shine. As I saw these men in their labors month in and month out, year after year, my hat went off to them in salute. "Can I possibly have the fortitude that they, to whom I am to minister, have?" I asked myself.

The beauty of the summer with its long hours of sunshine as the train wound its way past the glaciers and through the canyons, skirted steep mountains, or passed over glacial moraine which actually was only a few feet of gravel covering sheer ice, could hardly excel the beauty of the winter as the moon sent its beams glistening on the same mountains covered with snow. But the beauty was not forever, for there were tough days too. Wind at times blew 75 miles per hour. Temperatures dropped far below zero. Snow drifted deeper than the highest box car. Three locomotives pushed the rotary snow plow as it chewed its way through the cement-like snow, with the firemen shoveling many tons of coal to the mile to keep the iron trail open. Perhaps the track walker could be seen out on the snow, disentangling the telephone lines as they were being buried by the drifts, bracing himself into the wind as he forced his way. These were my parishoners. I was proud of them. I was happy to be their pastor and minister to them for my church, bringing them nearer to my Lord if that were at all possible. What a challenge it was!

CORDOVA--ROUGH GOING

In Jonah it reads, "The Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea, and there was a mighty tempest." That was and is Cordova. As we said before, it rained 16 and 17 feet a year and it came down horizontally. We used to joke about the wind holding the tide out for three days. But as Knute Rockney once said when his team was playing a tight championship game, "We like it best when the going is tough," so did we never despair when the winds blew and we had a great tempest.

We have seen roofs of houses being blown from the townsite to the sea. We have seen sidewalks being blown over. We stood in our own buildings as a front window was blown in with a blast, the front doors were torn off and on their way to the basement took two others with them, another door was carried to the tundra below, and a wall was sprung out causing the plaster to fall to the floor. We have had to take our children at another time under our arms as we crawled on our hands and knees over the church yard until we got into the lee of a rock across the street.

The autumn rains were then replaced by severe winters at various times. The first Christmas we spent on our backs under the church building with a blow torch trying to keep the water lines thawed so the furnace could operate. Children's sicknesses would strike us during the dark of the winter; three of the Christmases were spent in quarantine and a fourth should have been spent in quarantine.

But again we have always felt best when the going was tough. The folks that serve you lived there, getting your fish and your copper. We were happy to bring the Word of God to them. So with optimism and a smile we tried to meet the challenge of the hour. May we pray with others that life for us may never lose its halo.

OUR JUNIOR CHURCH

As Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man, so this is a yardstick how we should grow and, as ministers, cause others to grow. Our adults worked on Sunday morning in many types of work at Cordova, from cannery work to railroading or other transportation. Hence we specialized with their work in the evening time. This gave us a great opportunity with our youth.

Our Sunday School was composed of children and young people. We held them all over except the little ones for the morning church service. The pianist and choir leader was a young lady, a sophomore in high school. The choir was composed of high school young people, with an occasional second choir of 7th and 8th graders. The other officers and ushers were of the same age. What a happy time we had together!

But our program was more than just one of Sunday School and church worship. When the morning services were over the older young people would go to our manse where the coffee pot would be set on and a lunch prepared. After that during the winter we would go to the lake for skating or the mountains for skiing. Tuesday night was the night for Westminster Fellowship or its equivalent. We always had the philosophy that when we knew where our young people were we knew that they would not be in trouble. It paid dividends. So went the years. Today these young people are adults and they hold commendable positions in the community and in the Territory. Some are at our National Capital in high places.

Our prayer should be that we will never get so old that we will not, as ministers, play with our youth. They need to grow in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man, but they will not do so unless we direct and help them.

AN HISTORIC MEETING

All good things must be replaced by something better. So is life in the pastorate. As Paul saw the vision to come over to Macedonia and help, so does every pastor have calls to places of larger service. This all happened to us when the Federal Government was setting up plans to colonize Alaska.

The growth of Alaska had been normal, not too rapid but yet growing. But in an area much larger than the state of Texas there were only 60,000 people at the time, half of whom were Eskimo and Indian, and that certainly is not many people. Alaska was being pictured by its Billy Mitchels as having a new place of importance in the world. We were about to enter into the air age. So Alaska had to be populated. The best way to do so was to set up a colony as in the days of old.

What was the church to do in such an hour as this? Was it to arise to the opportunity and serve the proposed new colony? Ours was the oldest Protestant church in Alaska and we proposed to do something about the need of the hour. The Alaska Steamship Co. boat met the incoming train from the interior of Alaska at Seward and each stayed over night in that port city. There the ministers of Anchorage and Fairbanks met me coming from Cordova and, in an all night meeting at the Van Gilder Hotel, plans were laid for that new incoming colony. Mrs. Bingle and I were asked to represent the church and be the new missionaries there. What an opportunity! We were happy even though we disliked leaving Cordova. But we asked, "Are we qualified for the task?"

A STEP INTO THE UNKNOWN

The Good Book speaks of Paul setting sail from Troas and coming the next day to Philippi. So did I set sail from Cordova, one month prior to Mrs. Bingle and the children, and came the next day to Anchorage--a little town at the head of Cook Inlet. The last part of this journey was made on the Alaska Railroad. Here I spent Sunday with Rev. Winterberger, the pastor of First Church of Anchorage, and together the next day we left on the combination passenger and freight train for the Matanuska Valley, getting off at a station called Warton, now known as Palmer.

There we had an enthusiastic reception by the few settlers that were living there preceeding the colony. There were enough people living in the valley to have three small schools about six to twelve miles away from the new colony headquarters of Palmer. We were first entertained in the home of the oldest ranchers that I knew living in Alaska, Mr. and Mrs. M. D. Snodgrass. The next noon we were entertained in the home of the Supt. of Schools, Harold Thuma. That evening and the following evening we held the first services of my pastorate in the Matanuska Valley.

But before the services could be held, I had to establish my new home. It was composed of a 7 by 9 tent. My Yukon stove was unpacked and set up. The pack which I had made in Cordova of cooking utensils, clothes, extra shoes, bed roll, and "what have you" was also unpacked and things put in some kind of order. My bed was laid on spruce boughs in the far corner and the battery radio I had brought with me was hooked up, using the pig pen fence for an aerial. You see, the only grass that could be found and the only cleared area in that vicinity where I could pitch my tent was where an old rancher years before had kept his pigs. No, we did not rob the pen--the pigs had long since disappeared. We were now ready for any new eventuality.

THE COLONISTS' ARRIVAL

As Joshua arrived with his caravan in the promised land, or as the Pilgrim fathers arrived at Plymouth, so did Don L. Irwin, manager of the Matanuska Valley Experimental Station, arrive with 67 families picked from the state of Minnesota. Their arrival was on May 10, 1935, in the evening time. Fathers, mothers, children, cats, dogs, suitcases, trunks, other equipment, and odds and ends arrived on that never to be forgotten evening train. They had come all the way from Minnesota by way of San Francisco and Seward. Tents had been placed in readiness and fathers carried the suitcases while mothers, many carrying small babies, followed with the children, and all found their way to their new assignments. There they were to remain till they drew their new farm, on which they were to construct their homes, by lottery out of a hat. It does something to you to see an arrival like that. Calling in their homes that evening, I considered it a rare privilige to be a representative of the church and to welcome these new settlers into their homes in the Far North.

Wisconsin and Michigan farmers came in two weeks later, by way of Seattle. The dust of the newly constructed and ungraveled roads had changed to mud by them. Rain had descended and the ground had thawed. Trucks could not get through--they had to be pulled by tractors. Again, as a representative of the church, I was happy to be there to give these new arrivals their first welcome. They could not reach their tents that first night and so were forced to sleep on the train. So I and the others of the community loaned them our blankets to keep out the spring cold as they bedded down in the train that night. We carried them food and saw that their wants were satisfied as much as could be. We sat up, stoked the fires, or took a walk to keep warm that night ourselves. Many times in the years to follow we thanked God we were privileged to be there at that time ahead of the farmers to assist them physically as well as spiritually.

FIRST SERVICES FOR THE NEW FARMERS

When Abraham of old moved forward, the first thing he did was to set up his altar. So was it my purpose to have an altar erected for these new comers the first Sunday. It was Mother's Day and the services were held in a 16 by 30 tent. For some it was a tender service, for they had left their parents so many thousands of miles behind. They were young families, some very recently married, and ties with home had been hard to sever. But as we spoke of the patriarch of old who, when he moved into a new country, first set up his place of worship even before his home, they caught on to this theme for themselves and they readily returned for the evening service.

That evening service was so well attended that the congregation had to remain seated; there was just no room to move up and down. Too, I was not sure whether the floor would hold the weight if there was much movement. Here everyone was introduced and it was surprising to see the families that were present--brothers and sisters, now fathers and mothers, who had migrated to the Northland together. Then the older residents were introduced and it was a pleasure to these new folks to have the older ones there to welcome them and to give an encouraging word to them in their struggle to make a new home. At the close I introduced myself as one that represented the Presbyterian Church USA and seven years their senior in Alaska. That seven years seniority seemed to light up their faces. They were happy to have one who was here before them that could give spiritual advice and helpfulness. And so they continued to return to their place of prayer that had been set up. A new people getting a new start in a new land with God.

AGAIN WE GO FISHING

It must have become a habit to go fishing, because here at Palmer we again said with Peter, "I go fishing." Except that this time it was a necessity. By July it looked like there would be a scarcity of food for the new families. Gardens did not get planted, meat was scarce, and prices were high. But there were thousands of fish in the ocean just 30 miles away. I volunteered to take the farmers in groups to Knik Arm to net the fish during the incoming tides and bring them back to be canned. The offer was accepted and to the salt water we went. We fished around the clock, cooking our meals out in the open and sleeping along the shore whenever we could catch a few winks. Periodically we rode the tide to Knik from the fishing grounds, transferred our fish to a Ford pickup, drove the 60 miles to deliver the fish and return, and caught the same tide on the way out in order to go back to the fishing area. The ladies had their part in the program also. The fish were brought to them at the Experimental Station where these farmers' wives canned the fish under the direction of the University Extension worker, Lydia Fohn Hansen. That schedule went on for 4 weeks as the winter supply of food was laid in. Neither wind, rain, mosquitoes, nor smelly fish discouraged these men and women as they caught and cared for as many as 800 fish per day.

Even though I was caught in quicksand twice until I learned to respect it, and though there was difficulty in preparing and conducting Sunday services, yet I was happy to have the opportunity to be with these farmers at such a time. The necessity for getting food, the close fellowship in a cooperative endeavor, the learning to know the farmers by their first names, the opportunity for Mrs. Bingle to learn to know and love the farmers' wives; these things all helped to cement a relationship with the whole valley that would not have been possible without the experience. May God help us as ministers and missionaries to be ready and able to serve our people in their needs in all areas of life.

BUILDING A PLACE OF WORSHIP

As Nehemiah said when the Israelites were rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, "They had a mind to work," so could this be said of the people of the Matanuska Colony. During the first months, services were held in many places. First it was a tent, but that was soon out-grown. Upon talking to Mr. Irwin, the Project Manager, I was told to get 5 or 6 farmers, any tools I could find extra, and materials that were lying around unused, and put up a building for worship, recreation, first-aid, and meetings. What an assignment! I got the 6 men, found 2 hammers, a 6 foot crosscut saw, and a couple of axes, and asked 2 Alaska Road Commission men to show us what to do. With this combination we began to build. For studding and joists we secured poles from the woods. Boards were scavenged from the scrap heap and they were short and at times broken. The Road Commission men quit us after 2 days; they were not used to that kind of a procedure. We finally ran out of lumber and had to finish one side off with wire screening. This building resembled a chicken coop more than a hall for worship, but it was what we had, used, and enjoyed.

However it was soon taken from us for a hospital. So back to the tent we went again. But now the winter faced us and not only as a church but as a family we needed to get out of tents and into some type of a building. Plans were made for a house in which we were to live and also hold services. As we were building we did not always know just what to do next. I felt like throwing my hammer into the bushes when it would hit the wrong nail, but the farmers rallied to the work and before long we moved inside, just as the temperature dropped to zero. This building was used for a church all of the first winter. One time 84 persons gathered in it for services. We hung the youngsters on pegs, I guess. It was always open for folks to stop to visit and rest.

These were days of pleasure as well as work, but the people had a mind to work and that made the effort worth while. Here we organized our congregation and started to serve the Lord with a full program.

THE CHURCH OF 1000 TREES

"New occasions teach new duties and time makes ancient good uncouth." Even though the house was good, we soon outgrew it. We had to have something else in which we could worship. So we used the gymnasium of the newly constructed school. But it was so large that we felt lost in it. Too, it usually had been used the night before, and not for a church service. It had to be cleaned each Sunday morning before it could possibly be used, and sometimes the refuse was spirited but not spiritual. This caused one determination by the people, to build for themselves a House of God.

In 1936 I represented the Yukon Presbytery at the General Assembly. There we laid plans for a permanent church organization, making it interdenominational under the Home Mission Council at the request of the Federal Govt. In Illinois I visited a church which I thought we could pattern the building after. I sent the architect at Palmer a penciled sketch made during the services there. When I returned, I found that blue prints had been drawn, logs designated for the building, and the people already in the woods cutting down the trees.

From there on we were busy. Trees were cut in the daytime and hauled to the mill site. After the saw-mill men had run out logs for the colony during the day, the men of the church ran through their logs at night. 1000 trees in all were used for the building. These logs were hauled to the church site as they were readied and the women and young people removed the bark. We dedicated the ground and laid the corner stone. Dr. C. E. Albrecht took the laymen's lead in these matters. Foundation logs for the 32 by 84 foot (plus 2 wings) building were laid and the walls started up. Almost all labor was donated, except for a paid foreman. We soon came to the truss work. Then we were ready to put on the roof. 21 volunteered for this job even though it was near zero and the snow was blowing. The church was dedicated on Easter Sunday, 1937. It was a day of rejoicing both for our Lord's resurrection and for our erection. Again it was because the Lord's people had a mind to work.

OUR YOUTH CAMP

The psalmist says, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." We all have had that experience as ministers and we cherish it also for others. I was anxious to have it for the youth of the Matanuska Valley and for the youth of our Presbytery. So in the summer of 1935 we went out looking for a camp site that might be available on a lake, where we could take our young people. We found such a spot on the shore of a lake owned by Mr. and Mrs. Clyde King. As we visited that pioneering family and approached them on the subject, we found that they had a similar idea in their own minds for that same location. It was proposed that we work together.

During the next two summers, with the aid of the Boy and Girl Scouts, we cleared out a camp site along the shore of King's Lake. A temporary building was erected. Those who participated still remember the fellowship and rich spiritual experience we had during that time. The year 1938 found King's Lake Camp, Inc. being formulated. Again Dr. Albrecht took the lead. He loaned us the money for the first permanent building. That building went up and it was first used by our church youth and then by the Girl Scouts and other groups.

But in using the camp we found that we had to expand. More log buildings were constructed. We secured tent frames from a nearby military post which were put into place. The whole farm having been put up for sale, it was purchased through money donated by the First National Bank of Anchorage ($4000), the Bank of Alaska ($4000), Mr. Elmer Rasmusson ($1000), and Mr. Howard Swank ($500). This then gave us title to over 160 acres of land, almost completely surrounding the ½ by ¾ mile lake. We were in business in a big way.

What are the results of this camp? Youth by the score have committed their hearts and lives to Christ each year since its beginning. Many of our laymen have had their start at King's Lake. The military who found themselves in the North also found Christ precious to their lives at this place. Some of the young men have gone into the ministry as a result of dedications there.

NEW AREAS AND NEW DUTIES

In 1941 Mrs. Bingle and I again went to the General Assembly. There, Dr. E. B. King spoke to us about a new work that needed to be begun along the Alaska Railroad and the Richardson and Steese Highways. This was to be coupled with trips to the Arctic, where we had unordained missionaries, to hold communion services, baptize the children, conduct business meetings with the sessions, and hold the annual meetings of the congregations.

With our buildings all built and a good congregation of nearly 100 established during our 6½ years at Palmer, we might have been tempted to continue on in our labors there. But the instruction came, as to Joshua of old, to "move forward," and so we responded to the call. It was necessary to get everything wrapped up quickly at Palmer so that by October we could move to our new area of labor. The headquarters for this work was to be near College, Alaska, where the University of Alaska is located.

The new work was at first localized into certain preaching stations. Healy and Curry on the Alaska Railroad were junction points where the trains stopped for meals and for all night lodging. Here many people lived the year around, besides the train men who were there only for a season. Services were also held at McKinley National Park with its many employees, and at the railroad town of Nenana, where our church formerly had had a pastor. The coal producing area of Suntrana was an additional preaching point. This then, with visitations along the highways where services were held at Ester and Chatanika, gave us sufficient work for a busy program.

Needless to say, this was not as easy as the work at Palmer. Some of these folks did not always trust the new preacher too much. Work with visual aids helped a great deal even though the places of worship were sometimes rough and the conditions surrounding the hour of worship were often unusual. Nevertheless, there was a good response at most places and it made us feel as if the effort was well worth while.

A TURN IN WORLD EVENTS

The Good Book says, "There shall be wars and rumors of wars," but little did we think that it would happen to us. On Sunday morning, Dec. 7, 1941, Capt. A. E. Lathrop, one of the largest industrial leaders of Alaska, and I were catching a ride into Fairbanks on a freight train. As we discussed with the crew the world situation, little did we realize that at that very moment shots were being fired which would forever change the picture of things in Alaska. It was Capt. Lathrop's own radio station that was first to inform the military in Alaska that war was on. When word came from Washington, D. C., they were ready for action.

After that, little moved except the trains. The whole country was in a blackout. It surely can get black at night in the Far North when all lights are extinguished and there doesn't happen to be a moon lighting up the landscape. We went under military alert. Many civilians were shipped out to the States and the tales we heard of incidents taking place as the boats passed through the submarine infested waters were not too good. Soldiers were arriving by day and night at bases throughout Alaska.

Supplies and equipment had to be brought in and the only way to get them to the interior was over the Alaska Railroad. The trains had to run and coal had to be mined. Crews were doing double duty. The cold of the severe winter, the black of the night with nothing to light the way, and the necessity of working long hours strained men's nerves and tempers were easily displayed. It was these folks, who were sending the supplies through on time, that I continued to serve as a representative of Christ. The affection of these hard working people and their response made me feel happy to be serving them at such a critical time as this.

TRIPS TO ESKIMO LAND

As the Greeks came to the disciples and said, "Sirs, we would see Jesus," so there is a great race of people to the north and west of us who want to behold the face of the Master. Since 1890 we have had missionaries among the Eskimo. Over the years that followed, some of these workers were ordained and some where not. During this period they were not. So it was necessary for the Board of National Missions to send an ordained minister to the Arctic periodically for baptism, communion, and session and congregational meetings.

This was a part of my assignment. In Feb., 1942, I made the first trip. It was to St. Lawrence Island, just a few miles from Siberia. Bad weather held us for two weeks in Nome before we could begin the last part of our journey. It was Sunday when the weather cleared and as the plane arrived at Gambell, church services were already being held. Someone said, "Amen," quickly and the whole congregation ran to the beach where the airplane was landing. After the greetings and the unloading of supplies, the Eskimo people went back to church for the rest of the morning worship. I went along. The songs that the Eskimo sang and the fervor with which they sang them reminded me of my home church in Ohio some 30 years before. The evening service with the people taking part in prayer and the giving of testimony again warmed my heart.

The next week we went by dog team the 55 miles to Savoonga. I don't think I was ever colder in my life. I sat too long on that dog sled without running. That taught me to get off and move around. One really had to run to keep up with those Huskies, though. At Savoonga we met a very lovely people and how they too could sing the Lord's songs. On Palm Sunday it blew so hard there that some could not come out for services, so we took communion to them in their homes.

It was on these trips that I learned to appreciate and love the Eskimo. The story of how Christianity has taken root in the hearts and lives of these people is a revelation of the redemptive power of Jesus Christ. It was only a generation ago that the Eskimo took the life of a missionary at Wales.

A STRANGE PEOPLE

An Eskimo differs from a white man, or from even his Indian cousin. He looks different; he acts and reacts differently. The missionary who lives and works with the Eskimo people soon falls in love with them as he learns their ways and thinking. We could well use some of their spiritual characteristics.

An Eskimo from Wales, that point of land on our continent that comes nearest to Siberia, related to me the story of his conversion. His mother and sister had long been praying for him. He had finally come under conviction during a trip away from the village out on the Bering Sea, and had knelt there on the ice and given his heart to God. When the young man had come into the village many hours later, he hastened to tell his mother and sister that their prayers were answered. But before he reached the house, his sister came running to him. She said, "Don't tell me what you did. I saw you kneeling there behind the dog sled." "How could you have seen me?" said the brother. "I was many miles out there on the ice." "Yes, but the Lord showed it to me," she replied.

At another time one of our Eskimo elders was in distress. His wife had died suddenly and he needed the companionship of his lifelong friend, also an elder in the Presbyterian Mission at Gambell. He could not find him. Soon the brother elder came into the village and went straight to find the one in distress. Asked where he had been, he said, "You know, for all these years I go at this hour to the hill behind the town for prayer." He stated that while on that hill, 1½ miles away, "I heard you call me. I knew you were in trouble, so I returned."

Another illustration comes from one of the boys that I had gone with from Gambell to Savoonga by dog team. Later, he was in the Army out on the Aleutians. I knew that he had been stricken with appendicitis, so I was anxiously awaiting word from him. This is the content of his letter which came: "I was sick, much sick. I think I die. I say, 'Dear Lord, come down touch my side, make me all well.' I lay there, nothing happen. I say, 'Please, Lord Jesus, come down touch my side, make me all well.' He did and here am I. I got up the next day."

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

As Paul loved and worked with the soldier that guarded him, so have Alaskans learned to love and work with the military that have been sent to guard them. 1942 was a dark year; we did not yet know whether Japan would strike through Alaska or through the South Pacific. It was thought that the war would have to be won at least in part through Alaska. Our Eskimo boys in the 4th Infantry were down on the coast on guard duty along with a large number of whites.

I had gone to these boys to hold services and upon returning saw new things happening. Army contingents were coming into the interior. They settled near the C. A. A. airfields. At Big Delta I observed such a unit and upon inquiry found that they had no chaplain. I volunteered my services and they were readily accepted. Out there under the spruce trees with the aid of my projector the first services for what is now Fort Greely were held. I acted as chaplain there for an enjoyable 4½ years until other chaplains could be secured.

This was not all. On my next trip I saw where bulldozers were at work. I inquired and found that a 1500 mile road was being constructed through the wilderness to the States. With one construction crew there was a chaplain employed by the contractor, Lytle and Green Co. In another area a Negro chaplain served the 97th Engineers (Negro troops), who were cutting through the 10 foot pilot road. I joined with these men to assist while they were on the field and cover their work while they were absent. Many times that winter the temperature went into the 60s below. At times it made -70. The Negro soldiers slept under canvas; spruce boughs made up their mattresses. Food and clothing were scarce. At times they had to borrow clothes and send those who loaned them to bed so that they could go out and do needed work. But the road went through on time.

The next year airfields were constructed, telephone lines were strung, and the illfated Canol oil project was begun. Rev. Crawford joined me and together we served these men for 900 miles out of Fairbanks. When our cars wouldn't run we thumbed our way. God was good to us. We were happy to be in His service.

MAKING THE WORK PERMANENT

Those first years on the Alaska Highway were spent going from camp to camp holding services. Many times it was difficult to get through. Rivers had to be crossed without permanent, or at times even temporary, bridges. In winter the rivers would freeze from the bottom upward in layers, due to the oncoming overflow, until at times the ice was 12 or more feet thick. This ice had to be crossed, and at times my car would break through the first layer and have to be dug out. We crossed ice jams that seemed like constructed dams over which one might plunge any time a mistake was made. But we made our services. We served the road construction and maintenance camps, telephone "repeater" stations, oil pipeline "booster" stations, military airfields, and all the other workers along the highway, as well as the scattered Indian villages near to the right-of-way.

When the war was over, conditions settled down. But Alaska would never be the same; she could not go backwards. The highway for which we had worked and prayed was now a reality and was being made more permanent. People were settling along it and highway lodges were being built. It was necessary to build churches to serve these people and also homes for the new pastors. Work in the Fairbanks area did not slow down either. The University community had grown and in our spare time we organized a congregation there. The railroad work was also organized and became what we claim is the world's longest church--225 miles long and 6 feet wide.

In 1949 we built the University Community Church building. 1950 found us building ourselves a new home on College Road, and also a chapel at Tok Junction, 210 miles from Fairbanks on the Alaska Highway. The year 1951 was spent tying up loose ends, while in 1952 we put up a chapel at Big Delta. In 1953 we built new manses at both Tok Junction and Big Delta. 1955 found us on the Alaska Railroad where we built another lovely log structure, a chapel at the Suntrana coal mine. We are now in the process of building a youth camp at Harding Lake near Fairbanks.

God has been with us in all this building and people find themselves nearer their Lord because the church went out where they lived and brought Christ to them.

SOME UNUSUAL PLACES OF WORSHIP

Periodically over a period of two or three years I called at an Indian village 12 miles off the Alaska Highway about 250 miles out of Fairbanks. To get to that village from the highway in winter, the natives would meet me at an appointed time to take me in to the village by dog team. At one time as I notified the natives over radio station KFAR to pick me up, one of the little girls ran over to the school teacher to tell her that I was coming. These were her words, "Teach, Teach, the Preach--she come!" So has this "Preach" been coming or going to some unusual places for worship.

At Wales as I visited the construction crews that were putting up the houses for the weather station there, I went into a tunnel under the snow bank. The dining hall where we held the services was under that snow bank; only the chimney stood out above the snow. As the drifts grew higher so did the stove pipe until it was some 30 feet above the ground by spring.

On the Alaska Highway in Canada both Rev. Crawford and I for some months would walk into one place of labor through the soft tundra, dropping to our knees and even hips at times as we fell into soft spots, to hold services for the men as they stopped to eat their noon lunch out under the spruce trees. They had little to eat and the variety was small. Tin cans were their cups and dishes. But they enjoyed singing the Lord's songs in that strange land.

One afternoon I met with the 97th Engineers for worship. We used an empty unheated building. The thermometer in that room said it was 15 degrees below zero. Although the men for some reason stood about the unheated stove, we again sang the Lord's songs in that strange place. I asked the sergeant what they usually did when it was so cold. He answered that they got the boys together and sang a little. The warmest in the 10 days before that had been 50 below.

So we find that it does not require a beautiful cathedral in order to worship God, but only a place where people are gathered together in His name, be it in a barracks, dining hall, railroad caboose, or out in the open.

BEAR STORIES

When the layman thinks of Alaska he usually thinks of Eskimos, igloos, glaciers, and bears. So, while the subject of this booklet is to give the pre-requisites for being a missionary, perhaps it is not too far out of line to deal with a few bear stories. Sometimes the missionary needs to be a good shot.

When the military was quartered near the town of Cordova, according to the pastor there at the time, Rev. Crawford, they were constantly being visited by a good sized brown bear, whom the men called Suzie. Suzie got into the strangest places at the strangest times. The men would waken at night feeling something cool on their protruding feet. It was Suzie's nose. One man rolled over one night and lovingly placed his arm over something nice and soft. When he woke up enough to know that there was something different about this armful, he discovered it was Suzie. Then they came to church one Sunday morning. Communion was just about to be served when in walked Suzie. She came straight up to the communion table. This kind of an elder was a little out of the ordinary. Suzie was about to take over the service when a quick thinking lieutenant (I guess that is why they are lieutenants) peeled back a stick of gum, held it in front of Suzie's nose, and backed out of the chapel so that the service could proceed.

Another story dealing with a member of the bruin family took place at King's Lake Camp. A medium sized brownie kept getting into the bacon and butter. Night after night this would happen, the young people losing out in the morning. Then one night he again knocked the lid off the underground cache and, stepping down, squirted all the jello out of a pan with his foot. That was enough; I decided to go bear hunting. I got him in the gun sights all right, but right in back of him was a ladies rest room. The next evening I did better. He came up for dinner so I grabbed my rifle. Well, I am not always that lucky, but one shot and he fell. I went up to look over the carcass, when Dr. Armstrong appeared. "Where did you shoot the bear?" he asked. I answered, "Right between the lake and the Reck Hall." He never has been able to figure out which part of a bear that is.

OUR PRESENT PARISH

The scripture says, "They go down into the deep places of the Earth." Such is the coal mine of Suntrana. The Indians called it Suntrana, which means burning mountain, because for centuries the coal had been burning there due to natural combustion. It was at this place that we built the beautiful log chapel during 1955. The folks of the mine are happy for this little place of worship, and now other places would like to have similar buildings. We are using it as one focal point in this area of the Railbelt Church.

On Easter Sunday, 1955, folks came from as far away as 20 miles for services at Suntrana. Some came by cars that the section hands use on the railroad. Others walked 3 miles before they were able to come by train. Five miles away folks boarded a caboose on the coal train to come, and still others came from the neighboring mine by car. Services were opened with communion Baptismal services followed, and reception of members, then morning worship. This was followed by a potluck dinner with more than 100 present. A missionary film closed the day after congregational singing. All went home as they had come. In the meantime Dr. Armstrong and I went by airplane to get to another focal point to have Easter services for the people there.

On the day of our chapel dedication the program was similar. The potluck dinner that closed the event had wild duck, goose, Alaskan fish, cariboo, and even bear meat to eat as delicacies.

Services are now held at these places 3 times per month. Church services are held also in the dining halls of the work trains that move from place to place on the right of way, and also the section houses that are found along the railroad. Our Alaskan Eskimo compose many of the workers in these points and they have come with good religious backgrounds. We hope to send them home with this same Christian experience. And so goes our 12 months of the year. Mrs. Bingle goes with me every month or so and is a very large part of the work.

ONE WEEK END OF LABOR

The Bible says of a certain people, "They reel to and fro like drunken men." That is me on the Alaska Railroad. It isn't the roadbed or the train that is rough; it is my continual going back and forth along the railroad to cover my field. The following is one week end just before Christmas, 1955.

Friday at 1:50 P.M. I left by freight train to hold services at a small community called Ferry. After services were completed and a fine fellowship had with the three families there, I went on by passenger train at 11:00 P.M. to the community of Healy. Here I stayed at the home of the hostler. On Saturday forenoon I went by coal train to Suntrana. Here I called, did some work on the chapel with the aid of two boys, and started the fire (it was about 16 degrees below zero). Later I went by car to the Usibelli coal mine where I called, had dinner, and did some more visiting in the evening. Saturday night I stayed at Suntrana, getting up about 7:00 to get things ready for the morning services. At 9:30 I had breakfast and at 11 o'clock we had Sunday School and the morning worship service with a fairly good attendance. At 12:30 I was picked up by the foreman of the Usibelli mine where he took me for services at 1:00 P.M. That service was completed by 2 o'clock, with a good response there also.

From the Usibelli mine I was taken by air back to the junction point of Healy, where a jeep met me at the airport. I was taken to the church house where worship and Sunday School were held, with about 25 out for services in a community of about 50 people. At 4:30 P.M. the driver of the jeep took me up the tracks about ½ mile, from where I started to walk to Garner, 3 miles south. Shortly thereafter a car on railroad wheels picked me up and took me on to this section house where I had my second, and very lovely, meal of the day. This dinner was followed by services and films of a Christmas nature.

My Sundays are not all that full, but three Sundays each month I cover at least the first 3 of these places, and at times I feel dizzy doing it.

SPIRITUAL RETURNS

Here again we go to the scriptures for the words, "And they dedicated themselves unto the Lord." Such have been the spiritual returns over the many years, typical of which are the following recent happenings.

Two of our young people from Suntrana attended the Young People's Camp at King's Lake during the summer of 1955. Both returned spiritually enriched for the week there under the leadership of the men of our Presbytery. One is now the treasurer of the Sunday School and an assistant teacher. The other is in a high school in the States and the testimony of the happenings at camp showed not only a deep conviction of the need for Christ in her life but also an acceptance of Him and a dedication to Him.

The following week the Juniors of the Presbytery met at the same place for their summer camp. One mother took her family and was adult advisor for others of the Railbelt Church at the camp. Again the returns were the same. I baptized the mother and children and took the mother, father, and oldest girl into church membership at a subsequent service. Today that family is an integral part of the services at Usibelli and helpful beyond words in overcoming the difficulties of transportation back and forth at the coal mines. This is similar to another family some months before who were all baptized and taken into church membership except for the father.

The question is often asked, "Have you ever led anyone to Christ?" That question strikes home to the heart. That and that only is what I am in the ministry for. But I, with others, react somewhat to the revival type of walking up to the front, shaking hands with the minister, and saying a few words, only to return to the former ways after a brief time. I want it to change the life "forever and a day." If they make the Great Eternal Gate, then I will know whether my work has been worthwhile or not. Meanwhile I want my ministry to bring in dividends such as those mentioned above. Folks have been and now are dedicating themselves to the Lord and we have made it our business to keep them dedicated.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MISSIONS IN THE YUKON PRESBYTERY

It was not only Abraham that went out not knowing whither he went, but also that is the program of Sunday School Missions. The general area is known, but the details of the field are left up to the Lord in His direction. It has been a program of faith--faith that the people would respond in the areas to which the missionary was sent, and faith that the home churches would support these new missionary endeavors. Their efforts everywhere, as illustrated by the work along the Alaska Railroad, have returned spiritual dividends.

The Sunday School Mission work now centered at Tok Junction, our former parish, is ministering to the community of Tok with its civilians and military personnel. It cares for the spiritual welfare of the civilians and military at the Northway airfield. It cares for the isolated trapper, the homesteader, the roadside hotel operator, the gold miner of the Forty Mile, and also to the folks who are transporting the heavy material to the arctic radar stations by large diesel trucks over hundreds of miles of frozen tundra.

At Big Delta the Service Men's Department of the Board of National Missions has continued the work begun by Sunday School Missions. Big Delta now has grown so large that it is called Fort Greely. The new service center there, with its manse and chapel, is under capable leadership and is not only keeping both civilians and military "on the beam" spiritually, but also is striving to bring others not already there on that same beam. This area is coupled with that of the Salcha River community where effective work is also being carried out.

Wasilla is a new area of importance in the Matanuska Valley. Here are homesteaders, summer residents by the lakes, a small but thriving town, and a new installation for the defense of Alaska. Here again our Sunday School Missions and Alaskan Department of the Board of National Missions have placed a man that Christ and His church might be sent forward in this area also. As Abraham went by faith, so goes the Sunday School Mission work.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MISSIONS IN THE ALASKA PRESBYTERY

Work in the southeastern, or panhandle, section of Alaska is under the jurisdiction of the Alaska Presbytery. Here we find the motorship "Princeton Hall" doing the same work along the coast of Alaska and about the many islands that we in the Yukon Presbytery have been doing along the Alaska Highway and the Alaska Railroad. The boat puts into cannery sites when the fishing season is on, holding services for the many cannery workers and the fishermen that are then in the harbor. It visits the fishermen out in the fishing areas, bringing to them the Word of God. There are many little villages and hamlets everywhere over this portion of Alaska that have no church buildings, or even a Sunday School in operation. To these people comes the "Princeton Hall" for services and Sunday School. At these places Daily Vacation Bible Schools are conducted too for the children in the summer time, either on the ship or in some provided building. Also along this coast live the isolated trapper, the fur farmer, and the homesteader. To these again comes the "Princeton Hall," the representative of Heaven. The Indian, the oriental, and the white all have the services of the church brought to them through the medium of this church boat.

But what about the future? There are so many little places as well as large ones to which the boat should go that there is not time enough in one year, even if they were able to go to a different place each day, to cover all of the need. Another new boat is being contemplated so that these places can be ministered to at least twice each year.

Missionary zeal is meeting this need. The captain of the ship, the engineer, and the missionary all are equally devoted. They are happy in the Lord's work and are ever on the move. They work and travel day and night. The sleepless hours, the absence from home and loved ones, all give evidence that the work of the Sunday School Missions and Alaskan Department of the Board of National Missions is on the move for our Lord.

A SUMMARY

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." This can be said to be the motto of the missionary whoever he is and on whatever field. The foregoing pages are sketches of my own background and work as a missionary and in them I have attempted to give prerequisites for being a missionary as I see it, and how they have helped me in that which I have done.

The first prerequisite is that the missionary, man or woman, must feel the tug of Christ upon his or her heart and life to serve on the mission field. By mission field, I am assuming it to be away from home at some distant point which is unrelated to the normal or average procedures of living and where the going is unusual or even difficult. If the tug of Christ is not there as one goes to the field, or if the tug of Christ is not on the life to take one to that field, then the missionary should not go. He or she will not be cemented to the people to be served.

A second prerequisite is that the whole life--heart, mind, body, and spirit--must be dedicated to that task to which he or she is sent on the field. Nothing can be held in reserve. To spend and be spent for the Lord must be the underlying and all-consuming passion.

Again, the missionary needs to have knowledge, and be willing to get more, of things of physical nature as well as have knowledge of the Word of God. In some places, for example in the Arctic or along the coast of Alaska, the missionary must spend at least one half of his or her time just being physically able to carry on the Lord's work. One must be a carpenter, plumber, mechanic, electrician, and general Mr. Fixit, or else the labor will be difficult if not impossible. While this is not quite as necessary in the interior, I have never seen the place where it was not needed to some extent. I have seen places where the missionary did not have this prerequisite or care to learn and that missionary failed and was soon withdrawn from the field. This

costs the Board of National Missions much needed funds and leaves the missionary much disappointed and at times hurt.

To emphasize the above let me give an illustration of the happenings in a church other than our own. This missionary too lived and worked in the isolated places. He traveled by dog team. That, of course, looks big and romantic to the prospect in the States whether or not he has characteristics for the out-of-doors. It seems as though this missionary in getting his equipment together had little of the sense that was necessary in selecting his dogs for sled work. He knew less about dog harnesses and even his sled. He tried to construct the sled himself. The harness that he composed chaffed the dogs sore. The sled runner had one bolt that stuck out beneath and scratched the hardened snow. He proposed to ride sitting on the sled rather than standing on the back of the runners and half riding and half running. The dogs could hardly move the missionary around. One day he met one of his parishoners driving a good dog team about 250 miles from their village. This parishoner looked at the missionary, the dogs, and then the sled. He knew something was wrong. He examined the harness and the sled runners. He remarked to me later, "Our pastor, he surely knows the Lord, but he doesn't know dogs!" How much are we handicaped by what we do not know, or have the desire to learn? We have difficulty in telling others the way to the Lord if we do not know the way to handle the simple things of life, or even be willing to learn about them.

Another prerequisite is that the missionary must love people. We have had missionaries who are up for the summer that, when they arrive for services in a remote area, will say, "Well, I just have 3 more weeks, 12 more hours to remain, thank goodness." Sometimes as missionaries of permanent appointment we give the impression that we will be happy when our 2 more years, 5 more months, and 14 more days are over so that we can go back to the States. Such careless speech on our part "dynamites" our labors. If we do not love people

enough to want to know them, labor with them for the short or long period of time, think their thoughts, and work with their problems, then we should never apply to be a missionary. Folks will see quite soon that we just wanted another to pay for our having a good trip to Alaska, or that we wanted to see Mt. McKinley, or that we wanted to shoot a moose or a bear. Some have even given the impression that the folks who live and labor in the Northland are not quite up to standard in this world of culture and education. When asked if they would care to chose this land for their labors, they would immediately reply, "I should say not," or "It's the city for me." Some do no calling; they expect the people to come to them for the services and not be seen until the next time for services arrives. If missionaries love people they will call upon them. It makes no difference what education they have, or what race they belong to. It makes no difference whether they are so old that they are ready for the grave, or whether they are young and full of vitality. We need to have the ability to hang up our hats anywhere we are and under most any conditions and be able to call that place home. We can go a long ways in our work when we get that feeling in our lives.

There is a last prerequisite, one which needs to be placed first. The missionary must know his Lord. He must love his Lord with all his soul, strength, and mind. The parishoner will soon know if his pastor is spending any time in the presence of the Master. He will know if the pastor is spending any time reading the Word of God. The temptation is to skip spending time in the presence of God or His Book, but without this the work is fruitless. Paul's admonition to Timothy is ours today. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."

Barrow
Wainwright
SIBERIA
A L A S K A
Wales
Nome
Gambell
Savoonga
ST. LAWRENCE ISLAND
YUKON RIVER
Circle
Chatanika
College
Fairbanks
Salchaket
Dawson
CANADA
Healy
Suntrana
Big Delta
McKinley Park
Usi-
belli
Tok Junction
Northway
Curry
Wasilla
Palmer
Anchorage
Valdez
Cordova
Whitehorse
Seward
Skagway
Haines
Juneau
Sitka
Petersburg
Wrangell
Ketchikan